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Conjugal Love and Duty:

A

DISCOURSE

Upon HEBREWS xiii. 4.

Preached at St. ANN's, in *Dublin*, Sept. 11, 1757.

WITH A

DEDICATION to the Right Hon. Lady

CAROLINE RUSSEL,

Asserting the Prerogative of BEAUTY,

AND

Vindicating the Privileges of the FAIR SEX.

DUBLIN, Printed :

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(Price One Shilling.)

Conjugal Love and Duty:

DISCOURSE

Upon Hebrews xiii. 4.

By the Rev. Mr. St. John, D.D. Sermon 1. 1787.

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DEDICATION to the Right Hon. Lady

CAROLINE RUSSELL.

Author of the Fragments of RHEAENA.

AND

A SECOND DISCOURSE, ON THE FAIR SEX.

DUBLIN: Printed:

By J. WILKINSON, at the Golden-Tree, in St. Paul's Church-yard.

MDCCLXXXVII.

(Price 2s. 6d.)



Advertisement to the Public.

THE Author of this Discourse, knowing very well how little things of this kind are generally looked for or minded, had never thought of publishing it, if it had not been so much desired.

It was the only easy and safe way he had of obliging numbers, who by themselves or friends had interceded for the liberty of taking copies, or reading it; and he was the easier induced to it by the opportunity it gave him, of paying, he hopes, no unacceptable compliment, where, a higher and much better was due.

*If the price * set upon it, is complained of as more than it is worth;*

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he

* The Dublin Edition was sold for Eighteen pence.

he answers, that where curiosity is ill-natured, he has a right to fix the terms upon which it shall be gratified; where it is not, it will not be grudged, and so fall into such hands only as it is fit for.

DEDI-



DEDICATION.

MADAM,

 HERE is an Italian Proverb * which says that *handsome Girls are born married*: the meaning whereof is not what hath been vulgarly supposed, that *Marriages are made in Heaven*: But that such is the power of Beauty over the human heart: That when they *will*, they *may*.

This being so, the Intimation to your Ladyship is to look out, and provide for a change of Condition: To remain Single, will not be long in your power, for Beauty that strikes every Eye, will necessarily charm many hearts: Nature ordained it universal Sway, and the corruptions of nature, multiplied as they have been through a series of 5000 years, have even yet been able to give it but one rival: In the human heart, (I speak it to their shame) temples have been erected to the god of wealth: many fair victims have we seen too bleeding at his altars; and, what

* Le Belle Nascono Maritate.

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is worse, the very hand now writing to your Ladyship hath sometimes been the *Sacrificer*.

To this shameful hazard happily your Ladyship never can be subject: what therefore you have to learn, is only to chuse with discretion; to maintain with dignity the proffered sovereignty which contending suppliants will intreat you to accept.

MADAM

At a season when the mind is just opening to receive the impressions, which determine to happiness, or its contrary; a Discourse of Conjugal Love and Duty, will not, I hope, be thought an improper offering: a poor one indeed it is; all offerings are so, in respect of the Divinities to which they are offered: but it hath that which only can consecrate any gift, it is the offering of a fond devoted heart: not the wax, but the honey of the Hive; recommended by kind intention, to help you forward to felicity, and to make that felicity endless: to make you, Madam, as Beloved as you are Lovely, as Happy, if that be possible, as you are Handsome.

When we talk, Madam, of Endless Felicity, our thoughts by early tutoring are apt to look forward to a different Scene, whitherto the highest, healthiest, and fairest, should often turn their eye, that the opening of that Scene may never be unwelcome: But as the religion you profess gives you no occasion for a confessor, and even the honour of being your Father's Chaplain,

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Chaplain, will not intitle me to the saucy privileges usurped in that character, my discourse must turn only upon such incidents, as arise from the Scene we are in, by a proper representation to instruct you how to preserve and improve the character imprinted in your Form.

In this odly compounded animal and intellectual System, three things only there are which Raise, or give title to pre-eminence and authority: SENSE, BEAUTY and STRENGTH.

If a System of Creatures could be found of only one Sex, the latter, I verily believe, would always carry it; for even upon the supposition, that it was female, as partial as I am in their favour, I see reason to apprehend, that they might sometimes run to that decision, and have recourse to arms.

If in another, a species of animals without appetites, Irascible or concupiscible, it would probably belong to the first, because in that case, I see nothing from whence controversy could arise. Every one would be a Philosopher, and probably have that calmness and impartiality, which now at best is but pretended: But as these imaginary worlds, even in Fontenelle's plurality never did exist: To give Law, to Govern universally and absolutely, without controul, is the prerogative of Beauty alone: By struggling, a man doth but
shew

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shew his weakness: Rebellion against Beauty is a Sin against nature.

In a slight survey, from the parade and strutting of the little animal we are led to imagine, the deceit hath sometimes stolen even upon me: that it is man who guides and governs the universe: *By the might of my power I have done this*: So He will sometimes superbly vaunt: like his proper Emblem *the Fly* upon the chariot wheel, *See*, he will say, *what a Dust I raise*: Yet in every boasted Scene, alas! what is he? a Puppet only, a mere passive instrument in the hands of women, edged and blunted, furious and blustering, gentle and tame, as you their Sovereigns Will and Direct. Thus proving what the wise Man asserts, *that Pride was not made for Man*: To Pride of this sort, He hath neither Title nor Tenure: *if He must needs boast*, let him take the apostolic pattern, in the plain literal sense, *and boast of his own infirmity*.

In the Customs of Modern nations, there are several things which at first sight seem to make against what is here asserted: but what then? *Man was originally upright*, the Inventions therefore sought out, be they ever so many, or so absurd, prove nothing: Look back to the generations that are passed: collect what the usages were in nations most renowned for wisdom and prowess, and thence Judge what is of right, and ought to be: there we have
Evidence

Evidence Irrefutable of all we contend for. Numerous instances there are of nations in which this Doctrine of Nature was never obstructed.

Thus we read in *Ælian*, that at CARRAS in Assyria, there was a temple dedicated to LUNA, where none were admitted to worship, who did not openly profess *Subjection to his wife*: and I know not whether I need repeat what every one knows, that SEMIRAMIS had established a Law, which for ages was never violated in any part of her boundless dominions: *that all husbands should be subject to their wives*. Among the Sauromatians, as we are told by Nicolaus from Stobæus, it was a fundamental Law, *that man should in all things, both in their families, and in their cities, be under the government of the women*: And in Egypt, the place where policy and good government first prevailed, it was, as we read in Diod. Siculus, particularly ordained, *that the wife should preside over the husband*. The women at marriage insisting always on this indispensable condition of their contract, *that the man was to be the servant of their will*.

- In the too often celebrated States of Greece, the Wives Prerogative seems to have met, I own, with some Interruption, and not so generally admitted as in other parts, as we may collect from that smart reply of the wife of LEONIDAS: when interrogated, whence it was that the Spartan women only had authority

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over their men; because, said she, *they only beget men.*

At Athens however it is plain from the *Cerealia Celeb* of Aristophanes that it was dangerous and had very seldom been brought into Controversy; it is from thence probable that Euripides was the first who had transgressed in this way: in the opinion of *Agatho* the Crime was of so high a Nature, that he absolutely refused to appear in his Defence; and the Sentence passed upon *Mnesilocus*, who had the Boldness to undertake it, probably prevented its ever coming into controversy again.

Valerius Maximus, however, plainly confesseth, that the Antients in general, *thought it a matter of more honour to be good husbands, than even to be good patriots and common-wealths men*; and how quiet, I may observe, would it make this country and State, if the same opinion, or sentiment, obtained among us! how many brawling Orators would it effectually gag! and make them as meek, modest and submissive in the Senate as they are at their fire side. And lastly, as to the Romans, how it stood among them, that ill-natured Inveective of *Cato the Censor* doth amply inform us; he was perpetually upbraiding them, that they who were the conquerors of the world, and gave Laws to all others, *were yet universally the Slaves of their own wives.*

Here,

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Here, Madam, you see is a large list of very respectable authorities, every one of them too, in point, to the case we are upon; and yet if none such were upon record, the thing might be fairly argued and concluded, from that often misinterpreted Sentence of THALES, the great Milesian, and one of the first Philosophers of the world: In his youth being asked, why he did not marry, he answered, *it was not a Season*: in old age, when pressed again, his reply was the same, *it was not a Season*; the true import of which, was not what hath been vulgarly supposed, that it was a matter of that concern, that neither of those States were equal to, and therefore only proper for the middle Stage, where wisdom and strength were in their prime: but that in short, no age or time was fit for it, if a man meant to preserve his Liberty, and not to resign the Dominion he had of himself. Since this was the unavoidable condition of Mortality, that whoever was married, had thenceforward a Superior, whom he must and ought to obey. Verifying in this Sense what is clearly asserted by an apostle; *that of whomsoever a man is overcome, of the same is he brought into Bondage*; and if a man in Love in the Act of Adoration, is not overcome, I shall give up the point, and my judgment along with it. It was upon this account, that *Alex. ab Alex.* tells you, that his Father, who by being a Father had undoubtedly the advantage of good experience, never had this saying of Thales out

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of his mouth, and was ever twitting with it, all who came in his way; thence proving, that whoever had a mind to be free, had this only way, *to live Single*. Nor is this, Madam, by the way, any prejudice against Marriage, for the same is true of a religious State; it also is a State of Servitude: but both are sufficiently recommended by this, **THAT THE YOKE IS EASY AND THE BURDEN LIGHT.**

It is in truth very pleasant, to hear often very judicious Historians, assigning the Epoch and settling the Date of female Government, that at such a time, and under such a reign, women first began to exercise their Sovereignty, to know the extent of their own power, or to be sensible of their own importance; when it is but to read their Histories, to see, and be convinced, that **They have Ever known, and have Ever used it.**

In France particularly, it was not in the reign of *Cath. de Medicis*, as Mezeray tells you it began: She indeed knew the whole secret of Government, and made great improvements in the original plan, as may be seen in her manner of conducting Enterprises. In her *Eclaircissements*, with the princes of the Blood, ambassadors, &c. she had constantly in her train, a Groupe of Ladies of the most brilliant beauty, these she played off as occasion presented; it was by such kind of Artillery, that she demolished every Fort that stood in her way, cut off the Locks of every Hero who opposed her; and yet, Madam, even

even She practised only the lessons, which in her youth she had learned from the example and conduct of *Diana de Poitiers*, her husband's mistress, who the Historian expressly says, *meloit de tout, pouvoit tout*.

Let the Instance be specified, and I will undertake to shew, however high the authority was carried, *That their Mothers did so before them*. From *Madam Eve*, down to *Madam Pompadour*, the Sceptre hath ever been in the hands of the FAIR: and the men who pretended least Subjection, have in fact been the greatest Slaves. All the great Heroes, the most renowned in their Generations, the Scripture worthies in particular, have had their *Delilabs*, to whose bewitching Charms they have one and all yielded: reluctantly some, and fondly others: *these* proving their wisdom, and *those* their folly, since *there is no enchantment against beauty*, nor any thing which it cannot Inchant. He must be something more, or something worse than a man — *i. e.* a God or a Devil, who hath escaped, or who can resist its power: The Gods of the Heathens could not; Jupiter, Mars, Mercury, Apollo, their amours are as famous as their names: So that that sturdiness in human nature, wherever it is found, which can resist, argues plainly how much of the *Devil* is wrought up in the composition: if the native power were not so great as it is, so many arts, so many opportunities to sooth and to persuade, would make it impossible.

In

In a point then, whereto all history suffrageth and gives consent; let no vain Sophisms juggle you out of your senses; tho' gloomy Pedants tell a different tale, that in wedlock you throw off your Supremacy, and undressing for the Marriage-bed, divest yourself of power; there is no such thing, no medium, nor any Instance to prove it by: See *Henry*, surnamed *the Great*: In the Cabinet, how politic and wise! in the field, how persevering, valiant and intrepid! was even He the Sovereign of his own will? No: but the servant of *Madam Gabrielle d'Etrees*: See him attending her in her *accouchement*, seasoning her Gruels, and warming her Flannels, doing all the offices of a Valet or a Chambriere: his soul, we must say, was undoubtedly in her hands, she could turn it whithersoever she willed.

But why talk of Kings and such like petty and frail Mortals? even the Papal chair, when its power and credit were at the highest, and no one dared to dispute its infallibility, gave in this respect frequent proofs of its Subjection and weakness: nor did their character for *Holiness* suffer any impair or Diminution, by having their Mistresses Saluted by the title of Patriarchesse and Papissa *.

* As in the instance of Heraclius, and in the little Epigram.

Papa, pater patrum
Papisse pandito partum.

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In a case so plain, what need of farther proof? man himself, without any tedious deduction of facts, proves it to demonstration: in every perplexing difficulty, here is his resource, here he never fails of success: by this mean they alternately confound their own counsels, and baffle one another's purposes, whatever is the point in view, the Wife or Mistress gained, the work is done; to get out any Riddle of State, no more is necessary than to do as you read the Philistines did by Sampson.

In the annals of a certain Barbarous State we read indeed of a Queen, to divert her husband from some ill-advised purpose, throwing herself at his feet, and rudely repulsed, with a *Madam we took you not to give us Counsel, but to bear us children.* But we are to consider where this happened, that it was in that frozen Clime, where the Essays of Nature are all rude and unfinished, out of the Influence of those benign Rays, which whilst they are Ripening always Soften human Nature, and where the people of course, like other products of the Soil, are ill flavoured, sour and harsh: from such Samples estimates never should be made; Nature, properly wrought up and polished, takes a different cast: the clay in one and the other hardly seems to be the same.

Hence, Madam, I have often wondered, among people so polite and gallant as the French, what could have given rise or continuance

tinuance to the *Saba Law*; originally Gallic it could not be, but of Gothic mode, transplanted from the Northern parts of Germany by Franks and Lombards. But why, after such repeated Experience of its bad Effects, they are so impolitic, I must say, so perverse as still to adhere to it; I cannot account.

To bar Females the Succession, where they always preside in council, is odly inconsistent; the example of what happened among us, the flourishing state of our monarchy under female Government, might have taught them to correct this ridiculous mistake. Let any one but reflect what we were in the Reign of Queen *Elizabeth*, what in the Reign of Queen *Ann*, what in the Reign of a *Margaret of Anjou* we might have been, had she not wanted the Incumbrance of a Driveling Husband, and they will find no Difficulty in concurring with what I say.

In short, Madam, in all my reading I remember but one Instance, where Beauty by the Tribute it paid, Interpretatively acknowledged a Superiority in our Sex: for its oddness, you will allow me to mention it; it is so much to our honour I cannot pass it over.

In the Fifteenth Century it happened, there lived a man in France, ALAIN CHARTIER by name; from whose Lips so many *Beaux mots*, and fine Sentences had issued, that MARGARET STUART, then wife to the DAUPHIN, passing one day with her attendants, through a chamber, where the good man lay asleep, taking it

it perhaps into her head that possibly his Lips might be as sweet as the words that came out of them; gently stooped and gave him a Kiss.

Whether the good man at that time was in any such Reverie as might give him a sense of his felicity, as the history is silent in this point, I know not. But this I know, that Had I been *Alain* and your Ladyship the *Dauphiness*, Though I had been *Master of the Sentences*, I was going to say, even Author of the Book of Proverbs, I would have accepted this honour in Compensation and full Payment for the whole, as of more value than the annual Prizes distributed by the Academy of Inscriptions and Belles Lettres, or even those more renowned of old at the Isthmian games.

As upon this little Anecdote, curious and intelligent readers may possibly make some shrewd remark: it is fit, I be before hand with them, with one of my own: first intimating to the fair Ladies of this Town, the instruction easily to be collected from it, viz. "That merit is not confined to certain habits, colours, or modes of Dress?" "That it may as often be found under a Band or a Cassock, as under a Sword Knot or a Feather."

The consequence I must needs tell them is fairly drawn, and to several now in my eye

may be of singular use, by making them hereafter more Delicate and more discreet in the Distribution of their favours.

☞ The Learned have distinguished Kisses into three kinds,* one denoting Duty, or the office of Friendship: another Sweetness, or the office of Love; And a third ——— or ——— here therefore a controversy is likely to rise among Criticks, under which of these predicaments the Kiss given by this good Lady to the Philosopher ought to be classed; and because the Learned are divided about the proper Idea marked out by the two last, † after offering to their consideration the reason of my own perplexity. I shall only beg in defence of the Fair, that till it is decided, the modesty of the Dauphiness may pass unsuspected: for whether she, at a proper opportunity, supposing Monsieur Chartier to have

* Oscula, Suavia, Basia.

† The commentator upon Apuleius insists that Basium gives the Idea of Sweetness, *osculum pudicorum*, and Suavium that of *osculorum impudicorum*. Apuleius uses Basium in this sense I grant, and his commentator to his adds the authority of Catullus not inconsiderable. But Petronius, as good, or perhaps better authority than either, constantly uses Basium in the latter Sense: as any one may see, from many passages in his Satyricon: It is certainly *Dignus Vindice Nodus*. And therefore to be hoped that some of the *Golden Asses* of the age, who being initiated into the mysteries of the chaste Goddess, often at the nocturnal assemblies of the *bona Dea*, and undergone such metamorphoses as Apuleius did, will help us to solve it.

been

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been a *Cadenus*, or *Abelard*, might have been drawn so far into the platonic Scheme, as to have played the *Eloisa* or *Vanessa*, without judging from the character of her Kinswoman *Mary of Scots*, presumptively, that certain qualities run in the Blood, I see no medium of proof that can lead to demonstration.

Be this as it will; what I have just now mentioned hints to me, a reason for expressing a latent Serious Wish, that whenever Your Ladyship enters into the holy state of Wedlock, some worthy Nobleman of our own country may be the happy man.

That we may have among us some of that Breed which stands so glorious in the Lists of Fame, foremost in the Catalogue of British Worthies: by whose Blood Tyranny was subdued and Liberty established upon everlasting Foundations.

How happy will be the man! how honoured will be the nation! equally honoured, but not so happy I! might I be admitted the Priest of Hymen to light the torch and tie the Sacred Knot. If, as probably, I am the first Suitor, I hope my Pretensions will be considered, and that many of my fair Readers, whose rights I have here pleaded, will on the occasion befriend me with a kind word. To Incourage your Ladyship, I can with Truth assure you, that in no part of his Ma—ty's

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Dominions True primitive *Dauidism* * is in higher repute or more practised than in this Island: which, for aught I know, may have been the origin of the Title it once had of *the Island of Saints*.

This prating old man! will he never have done? Not yet; for to you, Madam, and of you I could prate for ever. Garrulity is indeed the vice of old age: the highest honorary Tribute that youth pays to it, is patient attention: we grow fond of prating when we are good for nothing else. It is generally the last faculty that leaves us, a Symptom of Life, when hardly any other remains: So that it is good natured to let us live as long as we appear to live; since barred of this we would not think we lived, and thus intellectual Life would go out with the animal, which seeing it doth not, is a kind of presumptive proof, that one may be, when the other will not be.

Besides, Madam, it is, though I am sorry to remind you of it, a vice I have observed common to both sexes; old women can prate as well as old men, and the same allowance on your part, if ever you come to it, will

* In many parts of Ireland, this term is Expressive of the Meekness and Subjection of husbands,

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be demanded: And alas! young, gay, and blooming as you are, to this you will come at last: Lovely as that form is, it will wrinkle and whither, that Vermilion will be turned into paleness, those Brilliant Eyes grow dim and faint: In the gazing croud, that now surrounds you, notwithstanding the blaze you make, the lustre with which you enamel and gild the spot you stand upon: Though you reanimate, give Life, sensation, appetite, a kind of Rejuvenescence, a Desire at least, a Wish to live and be young again, to every thing you touch or look upon, the meanest of your admirers, even I, wizened and worn out by labour, age, nay worse by disappointments, in the course of a few suns and moons, will be as much respected, heeded, listened to. Pity indeed it is! but it must be so: What are you then to do? Why briefly this, Look as well into yourself as at yourself, and thence learn how to preserve and to improve the Authority which Beauty gives, to make it *indefectible*, and as I maintain it may, *interminable*.

After all, Madam, though the Doctrine I have here inculcated, is both so certain and so salutary, nothing in nature, Experience or History to be said against it, we are hardly I doubt to hope, that it will pass without Exception, or that no offence will be taken: Though it is as old as the creation, it will be called innovating, and I am moreover sensible,

sible, that in some things I have touched the tender part with less gentleness, than such sores are wont to be handled: if complaint is made, I know from what Quarter it will come; and what I have to offer in apology for myself is this, that an extirpative, not a Palliative cure was intended, that the circumstances of the case required it, and that in the way I have prescribed and in none other, that Harmony and concord, so necessary to season and give relish to all the other Enjoyments of Life can ever be secured: that however invidiously the thing may be represented, or taken, the Local Customs against which I have declared, are confessedly usurpations, and being now every where found untenable, to advise a quiet and peaceable Surrender of them, was both prudent and friendly; since to do that of choice, which of necessity must be done at last, will always be prudent.

The premises therefore duly considered, I am now to presume that even that awful and tremendous word A CURTAIN LECTURE, will want little if any apology. Whether I was rash in estimating and measuring other mens powers, manners and tempers by my own, I know not; there is a surprising Vanity I own in the human species, *only those can receive this Saying to whom it is given*: but still such in general is the condition of man's frail and impotent Nature, that it will Ever be

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be necessary, as long as these mixed Societies and combinations last, it will have its use and maintain its credit.

As to myself, all I have to apprehend or fear is that Cursed Spirit, which condemned *Douglass* and censured the author: from a Late Experiment, I have reason to know that the Sour Leaven is working in some of the same *pious Breed* here: as our Ecclesiastical Constitutions, are some of them very ambiguously worded, and often less explicit than might be wished in Determining, what is, or is not *Heresy*: Some Inquisitor of the Holy office, warm in the Search and sagacious in Detecting it, might possibly take up both me and my Sermon, and so effectually put an End to my prating at any time hereafter, unless I am allowed to take shelter under your Ladyship's Wings; there indeed I shall be safe, there I will laugh at their resentment, and Defy their malice.

And as a fair face is always the Index of a sweet mind, and Beauty and good temper, in all the Instances I have ever observed, go inseparably together; Yours must be of the Softest and Sweetest kind. Whence I draw this comforting assurance, that whatever Sentence I may incur from others, You will

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will not lightly reject, but patronize and kindly accept the respects which are here tendered by,

Madam,

Your Ladyship's then much obliged, now

most faithful, and for Ever Devoted

humble Servant,

The AUTHOR.

And as a fair face is always the index of a sweet mind, and Beauty and good temper, in all the instances I have ever observed go inseparably together; Yours must be of the softest and sweetest kind. Whence I draw this comforting assurance, that whatever sentence I may incur from others, You will



HEBREWS xiii. 4.

*Marriage is honourable in all, and the Bed undefiled:
But whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.*



I HAVE not made choice of these words from the apprehension that the youth of either Sex, want much Encouragement to enter into the matrimonial State; for although Voluptuousness and Luxury, (undoubtedly the ruling Vices of the age) have made many more attentive to the opportunities of getting wealth, than to the common Instincts of nature, and thence to defer it longer, than is equal, or even prudent; in General it must be admitted that many are too hasty and forward to engage in it: which may be one good reason why many of them, before they are long in it, wish and would be glad to get out of it: when they find, as they often do, that instead of a rational choice,

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upon

upon proper and warranting motives, They had only pleased a Transient Loose Desire, that is too often disappointed; and when it is, as often changes into aversion.

As Little is it my Design to check any tender Affection, any soft and genial impulse of Nature: for whatever hath been or may be alledged, in a Spirit of Declaiming, from a wrong State of the obligations of Nature, or from a mistaken interpretation of the rules and precepts of Religion, These undoubtedly lay the foundation of all private happiness, and under proper training are the Springs of Every Social Comfort. And even the Disappointments generally observed and complained of, arise oftner from the crossing of these affections, by the interfering of other ends and motives, than even from the inadvertent precipitance, which juvenile warmth is sometimes the occasion of.

THE Things I have in view, neither of them improper from this place, nor undeserving your Attention, are these;

(1) To assert the Honour and Dignity of the married State, and

(2) To shew in what way both the Honour and the happiness of it may be best secured.

THE first to reform, if happily we may, those who abuse it to purposes alien to its intendment, or who treat it with derision and ridicule: The second to instruct such as have already launched into this ocean of bliss or misery, and are obliged to take their fate in that bottom, in which they have imbarqued, how to improve the Advantages they already possess, or to make their Yoke lighter and easier, if it happen to gall and lie heavy upon them.

THE first sentence in the verse, *marriage is honourable in all*, may be taken in a twofold sense, either as implying a matter of fact, that in all ages, as well as at the time the Apostle wrote, and in all countries of the world, as well as in Judea, marriage had ever been held in honour, and respected; or as implying that upon many accounts, and for many wise and good reasons, it both was and ought to be so: And if it were necessary to go into the proof of either, one would be easily made out, by a review of the various laws and institutions to inforce it in all the oldest and best policied states of the world, and the other with equal certainty and ease by many clear and convincing arguments: But as both will unavoidably mix in the Subject, and offer to our thoughts, as we go along, in the way I have already planned, I shall content myself at present with having first mentioned them here; and proceed to what I imagine is more important and necessary.

WHAT I am first engaged to do then, is to assert the Honour and Dignity of the married state: And to this I am invited, or rather challenged by two sorts of men: *Monks and Libertines*: One of which would cancel the obligations to it by the pretence of RELIGION, and the other by the pretence of LIBERTY.

THE first, viz. *Monks*, I know will not own the charge: but it is true for all that, as I could easily prove against them: And if they plead that their meaning is not criminal, I can easily prove also, that their meaning is as bad, as their practice.

THE pretence I have told you, is to raise piety, by giving more time and leisure for Devotion: a pretence that rarely indeed fails to catch and seduce the unwary; but let it be examined, and it will be found, that plausible as it is to weak minds, it hath no reason to support it; because it never can be pious either in design or effect, to cancel any moral obligation, or to make void any command of God. Wherever the Divine Law or Duty leads, true Piety will always invite and draw men to follow: And if the voice of Heaven, or even the whispers of sound and uncorrupted reason point out the end, and direct the pursuit, to set up any will-worship of our own in opposition, is impious; too presumptuous for a creature, the work of his hand. The pretence of Serving him with greater Strictness, with more fervency, or even
purity,

purity, will not excuse: because the author of our nature, undoubtedly knew best what was fit and good for us, what we could bear, and how to direct us. Or had the Law of God been silent in the matter; Experience, which generally discovers with sufficient clearness and certainty the Will of Providence, hath every where evinced, that wherever they have had Authority to bring their rules into practice, they have eventually served very contrary purposes, and so baffled the pretence: for instead of strengthening the Ties of Chastity and preserving the Innocence of either Sex, they have in fact promoted Lewdness, and been the Instruments of very scandalous corruption.

HENCE it would seem, that in their account, forms of Piety are of more value than real chastity: probably indeed they are, and there is this to confirm the Suspicion, that the more corrupt, and vicious human Nature is, the more those foundations do, and must flourish.

BUT in what respect I pray is marriage a hindrance to Piety? Why, by immersing us too deeply in the cares of the world, it gives too little time, and less inclination to the duties of Retirement, *Prayer and penance for Sin*: And here our Saviour's words shall be wrested to speak in their behalf: *Martba, Martba! Thou art troubled about many things; But one thing is needful.* But let us observe, may not prayer go along with every other Duty, and be performed

performed in every State? Are the commands of God contradictory, or inconsistent? Is there not a Time and a Season for Every purpose? *A Time to pray, and a Time to work?* No State, I venture to say, is without such intermissions, as to allow time enough for this: And if Martha had not been too solicitous for the food that perisheth, Martha had not been reprehended: It is only when the concerns of soul and body interfere, that either is to be set aside, which they never do, when both are duly proportioned. And as for penances; those formalities, by which they teach, Sin is to be purged and pardoned, they are never necessary, till after the Duties of our State have been first violated or neglected: Then, and then only by a discreet application they may be of service: but as long as the mind is pure, and the body chaste, neither have any need to be mortified; the command to mortify is not in force, till after pollution and guilt have been incurred.

ALL the great and numerous foundations therefore erected by the governors of Popish churches, where the initiated are all tied by vows of celibacy, and all possible delusory arts used to court and persuade as many as they can to come in: I freely pronounce to be open and absolute violations of God's Laws. Of this primary Law or ordinance of Heaven, given to Man whilst he was in a State of Innocence, and wisely intended as the only best Expedient to keep him for ever innocent. And the pretence of improving by these, peoples Piety, of raising them to higher, more rapturous

rapturous and refined degrees of it, idle wicked and absurd : It is to do, what St. Paul even started to mention ; *Incoaraging and committing Sin, that Grace may abound.* And neither the Institutors nor Encouragers of these Societies will be able to vindicate them by any good reason, till they are able to prove, contrary to the sense of the Apostle, that where the contrivance is sinful, and Sin will probably abound in the Effect, *Grace will abound also.*

I do not mean to condemn in the gross, all those who have taken to these solitary retirements : many, I charitable presume, have been led into them by sincere though mistaken principles ; and many possibly have lived in them without deviating from that intent : This may be ; but still it must be allowed, that these same persons might have employed their time and talents more usefully in the world, by mixing and conversing with their fellow creatures, mutually participating and conveying the common blessings of Nature and Providence : This undoubtedly was the will of their Creator ; these the purposes to which he appointed, and for which he made them. So that we are to consider them under a still stronger and higher aggravation, both as trespasses upon the common rights of Nature, and as oppressive Yokes, which it is not able to bear. To which few have ever submitted by choice, and fewer still without a sorrowful repentance.

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THIS forbidding to marry (which St. Paul predicted as a great corruption, that was to happen in the Christian church) *He calls the Doctrine of Devils*; and if the Doctrine be Devilish, the Device I am sure is more so; worse in effect, as bad almost in kind, as that inhuman custom of *sacrificing Children to Moloch*; for so it is, that by the authority of Parents concurring to forward the Device, thousands before they are at Discretion to chuse, before they are capable of distinguishing good from evil, with an Inhumanity far exceeding that of JEPHTHA, the devoted victims of the pride and avarice of parents and kinsmen, are here yearly immured, and like that unhappy maid, left, not for months, but for their whole lives to *bewail their Virginity*.

It will not, I apprehend, be necessary to reason longer upon the Subject, because most of those who hear me are, I believe in this Instance, Protestants by complexion, more disposed to the freedoms of Society, than to the austerities of a Cloister: I shall therefore only farther observe, that whoever will be at the pains to examine the nature and tendency of these foundations, the maxims upon which they are conducted, and the rules by which they are governed, will easily perceive, that they have all one common End, and only sure Mark at which they aim, *viz.* the profit of the undertakers and managers; the founding and enlarging of a temporal power, by the abuse and corruption of a spiritual one; and are all of them so many villainous plots against the common privileges of Nature;

Nature; Snares to Virtue, wherein thousands have been intrapped and undone; who, had they never come there, might have escaped both pollution and guilt.

(2) THERE are people in all countries, and in all professions, *viz.* LIBERTINES, who, under the pretence of Liberty, set themselves to discourage this State, and by banter and ridicule to bring it into contempt; who yet have this only to plead against it, that it is some curb to their vices; and whilst it is held in honour, stops the issues of Sin, by restraining concupiscence, more effectually than any thing in the world beside.

THE humour of ridiculing this rite was introduced, and became fashionable, under the Example of a dissolute Prince; which encouraged such licentiousness in the Stage, as soon corrupted the general taste, to the degree, that hardly any thing entertained, or was received there with applause, that was not salted with some obscene railery. In consequence of which, not only the thing, but even the persons who made it their choice, were laughed at. They were objects of pity, the butts of sneer, whom necessity had forced into it.

A HUMOUR so inconsistent with common sense, and every social dear regard, could not hold long. The pulpit, which in that universal degeneracy of men

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and manners was not silent, got in this instance the better of the Stage, and at least happily reformed it. To the honour of the present age, the few patrons it hath, are as despicable as they are dissolute : but it may be observed, that the pains taken to correct it, had possibly met with quicker success, had not the fair sex, by a lewd and wanton behaviour, contributed to keep it up : without encouragement from them it never could have run to the extravagance it did ; for how little soever some of them may suspect, or believe it, *they* are the only sure guardians of men's virtue, and have more power to reform than either priest or magistrate can pretend to : if therefore the manners of the age should ever take the same disagreeable turn, though they may be the principal sufferers, they must bear the blame of it, and the infamy to ; for this reason, that it is always in their power to support the honour and dignity due to the married state, from the influence, which few of them want to be told, they have over the affections and inclinations of mankind.

I WILL offer no apology therefore for telling them, that if their discretion was equal to their charms ; if they were at equal pains to embellish their minds as they are to adorn their bodies, they might go near to reverse the customs of the world and the maxims of nature ; might sway the scepters of kingdoms, and be the law-givers and governors both of states and families, without either wearing of arms or changing apparel.

It is plain, and it is happy mostly for the family where it falls out, that where that *apple of Gold*, in a picture of *Silver*, beauty and virtue meet, they bear an irresistible sway over the hearts of men : and where the heart is inflaved, the will is too fast chained to be free; for the same link will always draw both : How many impetuous and daring spirits, who have awed even their sovereigns, and made whole senates tremble, have been seen servilely crouching to draw the smiles of a wife ; and the conquerors of the world, for these and other little endearments, fain to lay all their trophies and laurels at their feet, satisfied as with a full reward, as if this had been the end and aim of their toil.

I CONCLUDE therefore, that if modesty, good sense, and the general practice of virtue, met with proper distinction in female regard, men would certainly take more pains than they usually do to cultivate those Graces ; for where we court we wish to be approved, and naturally pursue such courses as we judge will best recommend us : but whilst women are so insensible and blind to their own interest and happiness, as to encourage those most who use this holy institute to base and dishonourable purposes; whilst they prefer empty and profligate rakes to virtuous and honourable lovers, they may thank themselves for a great share of that misery to which they are tied, and we shall in vain hope to see the evil of this case ever corrected.

BE this as it may, the advantages of this solemn institution to the general state of the world, and all the particular societies of it, are enough to keep up its credit with the virtuous and reasonable of both sexes, and upon fair account to over-balance any thing which the voluptuous and dissolute have to say against it.

To impress this strongly and clearly upon your thoughts, I assume (1) that the strength, grandeur and security of every state depends principally upon the numbers, good discipline, and proper training of the people; and (2) that people are more quickly multiplied in lawful wedlock than in any other way.

WHETHER antient or modern nations were most populous, * (though it is a question of use) I shall not now examine; I only observe, that if the Divine Law had been every where observed, according to its strict intendment, the odds long since must have been greatly on the side of the moderns; since writers in favour of the antients assign and insist always upon the depopulations and waste by the monastic orders and nunneries, as one of the greatest causes of decay among moderns.

* Spirit of Laws. Hume's Ess. on the Pop. of Ant. Nat. and Wallace on the Numbers of Mankind.

So whether in those Countries where plurality of wives is indulged, the increase be as great, as among us where only one is lawful, I have never seen a sufficient number of facts well attested, to reason upon, and to determine with certainty: the most accurate modern accounts, (if we may trust to them, would lead us to believe that it is) though in one thing they plainly contradict Experience, all the great transmigrations; and those numerous swarms, that have gone out from one quarter, and over-run and settled in others, having constantly issued from those parts where this Divine Institute is strictly observed, and Polygamy forbid.*

LIBERTINES may perhaps tell us of another way, (a way not fit to be mentioned here) by which the inconveniences attending Polygamy might be avoided; a scheme too wild and frantic to deserve consideration, and which by loosening and cancelling the ties of all order, law and decency, would quickly

* This may help to decide the dispute between Sir W. Temple and Mr. Hume: The first asserted a fact, viz. that the transmigrations have ever been from west to east; without giving or going into the reason of it: The other, that they had always been from poverty to plenty: and that is natural and reasonable; but does not account, why the Swarms should be always greatest, in the barren or less fertile Parts. Arguments that favour religion, got no attention from Mr. Hume: The wonder is, it did not occur to Sir W. T. who was no Libertine, nor very Sceptical.

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introduce such confusion as would be unsufferable; and throw the world back into that State which proceeded and brought on its desolation: in punishment for its wickedness, its almost entire destruction: for so the sacred writings represent it to us, and this as one of the principal causes which brought it on; when men, following none other Law than the Impulse of Brutal Appetite, *Took them wives, of all which they chose**, promiscuously, without Discretion or Decency, without regard to age or affinity.

By this account then (I would have every Libertine consider it well) even Fornication, is a violation of the natural Law, a Sin against reason, as well as against religion, a Sin of so deep a Dye, that as the means of restitution, which is the Essence of Repentance, are rarely, never indeed, afterwards in their power; I see nothing that can wash it out: lost innocence can never be restored, no amends can be made to a person that is undone.

AND as for adultery, it is so horrid, so insufferable, so crying, that no plea can be found, nor any punishment too severe for it. It is a scandal to all Christian Legislators, that the penalty of the Jewish

* See Woodward Nat. Hist. and Aynsworth on Gen. vi. 2.

Law in this Matter hath every where been mitigated.

WHAT hath been said, I hope, will put all such as hear me, and are in any Degree concerned, upon considering that dreadful Sentence in the text, *Fornicators and adulterers God will judge*: nor let them flatter themselves, that Simple Judgment is all that is here intended; for the true and just construction of the word is, *God will punish*. * The penalty under the Jewish Law was temporal Death, and many instances how rigorously it was executed, are still upon record: that of the people of Sodom, as well as those which preceded and brought on the flood, is a terrifying Example: and under the Christian Law, the punishment denounced is Eternal Death, Death without mercy, and without appeal. But because it is distant, deferred, and not speedily executed, the hearts of men are therefore set in them to do Evil: But for all that it will come, come when they least expect it; at the instant perhaps, when they are putting the Evil Day far from them, and have it least in their thoughts; as a Thief in the night, break in upon the beds of uncleanness, in the moment they are indulging their lusts: *and who then may abide its coming?* where will they shelter or hide themselves from

* *αἰσῆς* is so used, Mark xvi. 16. and John iii. 17. See Grot. in Loc.

the consuming wrath? from the worm that never dies, and from the fire that is not to be quenched?

But still in bar to what we have offered, an objection lies in the way: It hath been said, and what is strange, by one* who was a prodigy of understanding and Learning: "That wives and children are hindrances to great atchievements and enterprises either of virtue or mischief; and that the best works, and of greatest merit to the public, have been performed by unmarried or childless men."

We are to consider therefore how far this is true, and whether there is any thing in the allegation, except the authority of the man who said it, to give it credit or weight.

As to enterprises of mischief, I intirely agree with him, and consent to give it all the authority you will; for I own that I never see a single man, who hath passed the current age of Celibacy, where no particular Security arises from his profession, or character; but I think I see an unsafe Subject, and a very dangerous Instrument for any mischief, that his own parts may inspire, or other mens may prompt him to: And as to atchievements of Virtue, a

* I.d. Bacon's Essay.

Distinction I insist ought to be made, because in common acceptation there is a variety of things which pass under that name, and generally applauded, which in fair account do not deserve it. A single man, as he hath fewer uses for money than a married man, may be likelier at his demise to leave a fund for building an alms-house, a church, &c. from the view perhaps of commuting for those very trespasses which his celibacy had run him into; or to leave a name at his death which he had not sense or virtue enough to raise in life. Of such piety we have, it is true, many fair monuments in the world; but then if we consider, that it is by the vices mostly of such persons that some of these foundations are at all necessary, the merit of the achievement is much lessened, if not entirely destroyed; and the argument so far loses of its weight.

BUT not to insist upon this; all history, I think, witnesseth against the assertion: it is there undeniably plain, that most of the great Heroes of the world, Law-givers, Soldiers, Philosophers, have been all married men; a regard to posterity hath carried arms, arts and literature, farther than any other motive ever did or could. Who is so likely to be influenced by this regard, as they who are to leave behind them the darlings and pledges of their affection, in whom they hope to have their names continued, and all the fruits of
F their

their Study, Toil, and Exploits, abiding and permanent.

On the other hand: how rare is it to see an un-

married person, who carries his views farther than

the short term of his own transitory being, and

confined to the gratification of his own humour

and senses? Self is their only concern, Ease and

Pleasure their only pursuits.

And if the utility of it, with regard to the pub-

lic, be so great, its advantages in private life

are rather more obvious: by this sweet and inti-

mate union, how are the hearts of men cheered

and comforted? every evil of life alleviated and

lessened; every joy of it raised and improved:

where the dispositions tally and are mutually sweet,

it is so blissful, so truly paradisaical, that he who is

in it would hardly desire to change it for another:

It hath this, the greatest and only inconvenience,

that it ties our affections too fast to the world,

so fast, that we are with difficulty weaned of that

affection, and hardly torn but by violence from

it.

Without this partnership, hardly any condi-

tion or fortune yields much content: a sour and

peevish inquietude, which in the long run turns

ever into melancholy, grows upon the best tem-

pers

pers in a solitary and single state, which the sweetness and chearfulness peculiar to the sex either banishes or prevents. Between man and man, the closest and dearest friendship rarely continues long, because they never can bring their obligations and interests to be the same. Here the ties of both lead one way; and as the knot is indissoluble, so, for that reason, may the friendship. Upon the whole, I cannot help thinking, that even the great man quoted decided against himself, when he said, "That a man at no age can want a good reason to marry." *For wives are young mens mistresses, the companions of middle age, and old mens nurses.* There are indeed numerous circumstances in this State to make it Eligible, and very few to make any wise man decline it.

Thus it is one mighty recommendation, that where it finds men Virtuous, it generally keeps them so; and where it finds them Immoral or Vicious, it as often reclaims them.

A most Reverend Prelate,* arguing against the Papists, observes with more wit and humour, than solidity of argument; that marriage is not a Sa-

* Dr. Wake's Exp. Ch. Catech.

crament, because it neither, he saith, *confers Grace* where it was not, nor *confirms it* where it was. I am as much in opinion as he, that in the sense Protestants explain the word and nature of a Christian Sacrament, marriage is not one; I only quarrel with the reason, and maintain that experience is against his opinion; and that without a quibble upon the word *Grace* it cannot be supported; where the wanton and profligate are reclaimed, there I maintain *Grace* is conferred; and where men are tied down to virtue till it grows into habit, and sin prevented by bars which it cannot get over, there I also maintain *Grace* is confirmed; and that both are the common effects of marriage we are all daily witnesses; we have frequent examples before our eyes.

MEN may not brook to be told this; but as I am here luckily out of the reach of contradiction, I will tell them, that for the little virtue many of them have, they are indebted solely to the advice and example of their wives, agreeably insinuated at seasons when none other can reach them, and operating in a variety of ways that no words can describe; nor any judgment but theirs, who are ever with them, and about them, could dictate; as may be seen from the many instances of such as turn idle contemptible sots, to the ruin of their affairs and families, who used to be tolerably sober

ber and decent, whilst they had the awe and advantage of a *Curtain Lecture*.

THERE are doubtless many unhappy marriages in the world; still the fault is not in the institution; and if a man hath chanced ill, it is odds he either had not discernment to chuse well, or prudence to manage well afterwards; or brought with him unreasonable computations, and falsely reckoned that she, who was designed by nature, and appointed by God for his companion and equal, should be the slave of his humour, or for a reason beautifully intimated by Solomon, which I must leave to your own understandings to explain: *Hast thou found Honey, eat so much as is sufficient for thee, lest thou be filled therewith, and vomit it.*

Let me now add some hints to explain in what way the honour of this estate may be best kept up, and the advantages of it secured.

To the Public the advantages are certain and follow, whether the parties will or no; but to the parties ingaging, not so: to them it is a fountain that sendeth forth both sweet and bitter waters. To those who mind their duty and obligations *sweet ones*, to those who neglect them *bitter ones*.

For

For this reason in a State so well stocked, that a few idlers would not hurt it, I would recommend to such as are very selfish and very humourfome, not to marry, at least till they had corrected and sweetened their temper. Because in this State they must yield to many restraints, and sometimes recede from their humours, or they cannot be happy: and it is no objection, that people who are so very selfish, that, as the great Author already cited observes, *their very garters and buckles are bonds and shackles to them*, are miserable in it. Such can be happy in no state; they are as unfit for society as for marriage; and convents and cloisters, if only such were to be put into them, would deserve Incouragement, as much as hospitals for Ideots or Lunatics.

WHAT is it in such case that men generally call being happy? If it be joy, as I doubt it is, that flows in with a full constant and equal Tide, without interruption and without allay, they misreckon; there is no such thing: human nature, man's state on earth, doth not admit of this: to reap the comforts of any condition, there are seasons and occasions where every one must deny themselves, and thwart a present appetite or inclination: every relation too hath its peculiar duties and laws; and there is no reason why that should be complained of as intolerable in this, which is the indispensable law of every other: Let Love therefore tie the knot; let hearts be joined as well as hands,

hands, and all the little incidents which are the common occasions of strife and vexation, will rarely happen, or if they do, find an easy remedy: where there is mutual Love, there will be mutual Desire to please, and Desire will both beget and quicken Endeavour: it will either prevent or extinguish every suspicious jealousy, dispose the party in the wrong to make suitable acknowledgments, and the other grateful requitals. When asunder, it will inflame them with a desire to shorten absence; when together, it will be a spring of lasting Satisfaction; they will part with regret, and they will meet with Joy.

BUT still Love must have Esteem for its foundation, and Virtue for its support, otherwise Brutal Lust will as well deserve the name; and every trifling incident will give it some allay: They who are cautious and discreet in their choice seldom find reason to repent; and wisdom in men, and chastity in women should weigh most in that Ballance, which is to determine their mutual choices; for the strongest bond of chastity and obedience in the wife, is the opinion she hath of her husband's wisdom, and the strongest bond of the husband's Love, is the opinion he hath of her modesty and fidelity.

LET me advise men however, never to presume too much upon their wisdom, nor women too much upon their chastity: for women rarely brook contempt,

tempt, and men as little care to be thought under obligations that they cannot repay: let each therefore refrain from upbraiding for defects on either side where one hath a visible Superiority, for upbraidings leave a sting in the breasts both of men and women, which put them too often upon retaliating. They create suspicions of some latent disaffection, that others may be higher in their Esteem, that they are weary of their Lot, and repent of their choice; which jealousy will raise rancour and bitterness, that preying inwardly will either destroy the person, or burst into rage and fury, that will make both completely wretched.

It is a bad method which some men take to cure these evils by flying from them: if a husband's conduct hath provoked the wife to clamor, if he runs to a tavern to avoid it, he will hardly find her in better temper when he returns: for by this he gives her a reason to justify herself; which she will rarely neglect to lay hold on.

THERE are men so unreasonable, as to expect, whatever irregularities they commit, in gaming, drinking, late hours and bad company, still to find their wives at home and in good humour; and I have known wives so unreasonable, as to expect that their husbands should always be at home, and in their company, though their carriage is such, as
must

must necessarily make home more disagreeable, than any other place.

HERE now I own it is hard to advise, for men rarely gain much by any rough or boisterous methods of asserting their prerogative; the less this is brought to trial the more secure it is, and more likely to be respected. All I can say is, that as this is a case wherein custom alone hath in all countries ascertained the privileges of both sexes, and here hath left little more than a nominal superiority to the man, the likeliest method to soften and make them obsequious is by caressing and endearments; and where this won't do, the case I doubt was either without remedy at first, or is past it now.

BUT what faith the Apostle in this matter, writing to the Ephesians? He adviseth women *to reverence their husbands, to submit themselves to them, to be subject to them in every thing.* He doth; yet let not the husband plume himself too highly upon this: for this restriction comes after, *as it is fit in the Lord: i. e. in the sense of an antient father, † where nothing is required contrary to good sense, or any rule of virtue:* And if good Sense is to determine

† Clem. Alex. Strom, 7.

either as to decency or virtue, I doubt the superiority will be often on the female side.

UPON the whole, if it should be granted, that Men have in truth the superiority of understanding, which they generally arrogate, there is no instance wherein they can shew it to greater advantage, or are under higher obligations to the exercise of it. Let them make what experiments they will, I will answer for the issue, that if love and tenderness will not win to an obliging and agreeable deportment, neither will harshness or severity: Even a servant will with great reluctance, if at all, obey a master who gives no other reason for that obedience than his will and humour, and inforces it by surly and morose measures: In all cases, if we would have those under us regular and observant of their duty, we must be first so of our own; give the example in gentleness, and above all in a strict regard to decency, to virtue, and to all the duties of religion; for after all that can be said, it is religion alone which can secure the joys and comforts of this and of every other state. Religion indeed will not raise love where there was none before, but it will always preserve it where it is: It will calm the mind, it will purify the heart, it will regulate the desires, it will correct any perversity of will, it will give good dispositions and confirm them, check evil ones and subdue them: it will make us mild and tractable, and sober and chaste; commence a kind of Heaven upon Earth,
and

and lead to everlasting bliss in the Heaven of Heavens hereafter.

WHERE God grant that we may all meet, husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and servants, and rejoice in the testimony we shall give one another, of having mutually discharged our obligations faithfully, lovingly and wisely; and thus rejoicing in our selves, enter at last into the joy of our Lord.

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